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## THE EDITOR'S DIARY.

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WEDNESDAY, *November 7.* To Power and Wealth: A Warning.

THE election of the Republican candidate for Governor of New York was not a definitive triumph of good over evil; it was only a temporary deliverance from impending disgrace; above all, it was a warning. It could not have been achieved, for example, if (1) the present Governor had accepted the renomination tendered to him, or (2) practically any candidate other than Mr. Hughes had been nominated, or (3) precedent had not been utterly disregarded by the National Administration, or (4) the radical candidate had possessed character as well as daring, or (5) conservative Democrats by tens of thousands had not placed patriotism above partisanship, or (6) the radical candidate had never let loose the torrent of personal abuse which, too late, he abruptly stopped, or (7) close association with disreputable "bosses" had not vitiated his claim of independence, or (8) Democratic and Independent newspapers had been lukewarm, or even perhaps (9) the weather had been inclement. In not all, but in *any one* of these contingencies, barring possibly the last mentioned, the appeal of an utterly discredited political adventurer to the spirit of discontent would have been made not in vain. Surely the wrath of God was upon us for our sins; why it failed to descend, or how long it will be withheld, He alone knows.

Despite undying faith in democratic government, we find the outlook from a condition that induced six hundred thousand citizens of a single commonwealth to swallow the personal disgust they must have felt, that they might make public protest against the existing order, distinctly unfavorable, if not indeed depressing. In such circumstances surface indications count for naught; underlying causes must be sought and, when found, removed.

Why, then, in the midst of unprecedented prosperity, this discontent? It is a time for plain speaking. For a long time have been heard mutterings of disapproval of the extraordinary activities of our Chief Magistrate in summoning, at frequent intervals, to the support of paternalistic measures the mighty forces of public opinion, normally dormant, yet ever quick to respond to the call of class jealousy; but it remained for the demagogue, through impudent implication of the identity of his purpose with that of the President, to enforce expression of these whisperings. First came the official repudiation of his pretensions at the lips of a cabinet officer, "by authority of the President," sincerely indignant, yet truly amazing from its apparent necessity. And now the public journals on the morning after the day of election!

The "Sun":

"Theodore Roosevelt in his summer home at Oyster Bay was watching the fate of his native State with a solicitude as intense as was ever aroused in him by any event in his career. None better than he appreciated the crisis. He knew it was no question of mere party success or supremacy. He knew that something was about to take place which concerned the very vitals not of the party but of the State, and not of the State alone, but of the whole country. He knew, he recognized, the forces which he had himself unchained, and there must have dawned upon his consciousness a sense of whittler, if they were not instantly checked, they inevitably must lead. Envy of the rich, hatred of class for class, intolerance of the law, impatience with the Constitution, resentment against Judges, a restless, troubled surging of the mass, no set ideas, no definite conviction of anything, but everywhere a deep, dull susceptibility to a man with a torch!"

The "Times":

"Mr. Hearst's uncomfortably near approach to a victory should serve as a warning, also, to those who have led or joined in intemperate assaults upon the business of the country, to men who in high or humble places have by profuse and ill-judged utterance roused the spirit of chastisement and correction to a pitch of passion far beyond the public need."

A caustic writer to the "Evening Post," after quoting the declaration of the distinguished lawyer, Mr. Edward M. Shepard, to the effect that "it is a crisis for the nation, for it must not be forgotten that this wave of recklessness and irresponsibility that is sweeping over us is the direct result of the utterances and actions of a Republican President," continues:

"Does any reasoning man presume for a minute to believe that Hearst would have had the hardihood to seek a Presidential nomination, or the governorship of New York, without the career of Roosevelt before him? Hearst had seen success come to him in the newspaper field from noise and sensationalism, but it is hardly to be thought that the idea ever entered his head that loud pretence, theatrical display, and blatant self-praise could win the Presidency until he saw the thing actually tried and done. . . .

"Now, in all fairness wherein is Hearst any worse than Roosevelt? Any more anarchistic, any more self-seeking, any more indifferent as to the kind of means to gain his ends? Hearst has been denounced for his criticism of the courts. Is this criticism on the part of a newspaper, a private enterprise, half so improper, half so indecent, as similar criticism on the part of the President of the United States in a message to Congress? Hearst has been excoriated for posing as a reformer, denouncing bosses and then striking hands with them when it suited his purpose. Did not Roosevelt ally himself with Addicks and Quay and Penrose and Platt and Odell, and even make up with the notorious Lou Payn, when he needed the votes they commanded? Was there ever a more purely demagogic appeal in the Hearst papers than the Roosevelt protest to Russia about the treatment of the Jews, or the utterly irrelevant passage in the 'anti-muckrake' speech about limiting great fortunes? Suppose that the charge so frequently made that Hearst buys his support is true. Mr. Hearst is spending his own money and not the Government's. He is not raiding the United States Treasury by means of an executive order to purchase old soldier votes; he is not diverting Indian funds contrary to law to gain the political adhesion of a religious sect; he is not extorting money from insurance companies to swell his campaign fund."

We have no doubt that the editors of these great independent journals responsible for these utterances are as firmly convinced as ourselves or our readers of the fervid patriotism and lofty ideals of the President, whom the Emperor of Germany pronounces the greatest the Nation has ever known, but clearly they feel and as plainly intimate that, in his eagerness to serve the people, he has heeded the dictates of zeal rather than of wisdom and unwittingly has played the part of a Frankenstein. No good purpose would be served by attempting now to fix the share of responsibility that should be thus ascribed, but if to the mind and conscience of him most deeply concerned there should seem, upon reflection, to be the smallest, we may rest assured that the suggestion will be received, not with scoffing, but as a lesson to be taken to heart.

But the true cause of discontent lies not in its fomentation but

in deep-seated conviction of injustice and inequality before the law. Daniel Webster, from the floor of the Senate in 1838, thus graphically depicted the demagogues of his day:

"They excite the poor to make war upon the rich. . . . They complain of oppression, speculation and the pernicious influence of accumulated wealth. They cry out loudly against all banks and corporations and all the means by which small capitals become united in order to produce important and beneficial results. They carry on a mad hostility against all established institutions. They would choke up the fountains of industry and dry all its streams.

"In a country of unbounded liberty they clamor against oppression. In a country of perfect equality they would move heaven and earth against privilege and monopoly. In a country where property is more equally divided than anywhere else they rend the air with agrarian doctrines. In a country where the wages of labor are high beyond any parallel, . . . they would teach the laborer that he is an oppressed slave.

"Sir, what can such men want? What do they mean? They can want nothing but to enjoy the fruits of other men's labor. They can mean nothing but disturbance and disorder, the diffusion of corrupt principles and the destruction of the moral sentiments and moral habits of society."

Such, in some respects, is the situation to-day. The country continues to afford "unbounded liberty" and unparalleled wages of labor; attempts to excite the poor against the rich represent now as then a desire to enjoy the fruits of other men's industry, and tend to diffuse corrupt principles and destroy moral sentiments and moral habits. It may be, too, that perfect equality continues to prevail, in theory, before the law, but it is not a fact now that this is a country "where property is more equally divided than anywhere else." The reverse, indeed, as we all know, approximates the truth, and these are the branches, but only the branches, of the dissatisfaction. The root lies in the conviction of the people that the great inequalities in property possession are due to unwarranted fostering and protection by the law itself, and that titles to many, if not all, of the colossal fortunes accumulated in recent years are morally defective, even if legally valid. We venture no opinion of the correctness or error of this view; we merely state a patent fact as of common belief that must be reckoned with.

What, then, is to be done to avert a possible cataclysm? What course should sober-minded, patriotic citizens, sincerely desirous of applying effective remedies and accomplishing genuine re-

forms, advise and pursue? Upon one point we all, rich and poor, agree, namely, that capital, whether wrongfully or rightfully acquired, does not bear its just burden of taxation. The very tariff that protects it is supported by those in moderate circumstances and the poor. Reduction of the rates would reduce the cost of living, which is already burdensome and threatens to become unendurable. Supplement such a reduction and supply the deficiency in revenue consequent upon it by graduated inheritance and income taxation, and a long step would be taken towards that equality which must be had by gradation or will some day be achieved by force and swept into license. The time has passed, if indeed it ever existed, when spectacular assaults upon corporations will satisfy the people. They may be deserved and essential to the full performance of public duty, but the utmost results that could possibly be expected from them fail to afford the relief demanded, and might easily check the progress upon which common prosperity depends. The two specific remedies, clearly defined, the one supplementing the other, are reduction of tariff duties to a point not yet even contemplated, and direct taxation of inheritances and incomes. Stupid "vested interests" will resist the former, interposing the familiar argument as to the business complications it would involve, and no less obdurate possessors of great wealth will struggle greedily to retain to the last penny their hoardings, without regard to the just claims of a government which made their acquisitions possible, or the temper of the people; but both must yield or take the consequences.

The undivided responsibility rests upon a Republican President and a Republican Congress. In 1896, in 1900 and again in the critical State election which has just taken place, citizens of the Democratic faith who placed country above party elected the Republican candidates. We say to Republicans plainly and, we believe, with accurate knowledge, that if they look for similar aid in 1908, they will look in vain, unless in the meantime they shall prove by their works their sincerity and earnest determination to really relieve, and not fatuously deceive, the people. Hearst is dead, but *Hearstism* is alive and growing apace, not in one class, but in all classes except that which is numerically insignificant. If ever there was a time in the history of our beloved country when Bourbonism and pecuniary gluttony should, from no higher motive than selfishness

itself, make way for breadth, patriotism and consideration of the common weal, this is that time. Else the whirlwind!

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THURSDAY, November 8.

The REVIEW to Teach Esperanto.

As a result of painstaking inquiries made personally in France and England, and through agents in Germany and Switzerland, we have become convinced that Esperanto will soon be recognized, the world over, as a language capable of universal use, and that, in consequence of such recognition, it will be generally adopted and acquired. The need of such a vehicle of expression, not for the displacement of any existing language, nor for the purposes of literature, but for ordinary service in business, travel and communication, has long been admitted, and indeed is so obvious as to render the setting forth of reasons therefor superfluous. As long ago as 1668, the learned Bishop Wilkins, in his "Essay toward a Real Character and a Philosophical Language," undertook to solve the problem; and many subsequent attempts, equally abortive, were made before Johann Martin Schleyer, in 1879, riveted the attention of the world upon his invention of Volapük. Despite the wide opportunity afforded this ingenious, though complicated, contrivance of expression, it not only failed to stand the test of application, but gave rise to a feeling of disgust which seriously retarded progress in the search for a suitable medium.

Several efforts ensued, but each quickly proved futile from lack of merit, until 1887, when the Russian scholar, Zamenhof, published his first brochure entitled "An International Language" and signed it "Dr. Esperanto," from the Latin "*sperare*," signifying "one who hopes." Many eminent scholars promptly conceded the merit in Dr. Zamenhof's suggestion, but the general public in all countries were so reluctant to manifest an interest so soon after the collapse of Volapük, that it is only within five years that Esperanto has begun to win the appreciation it deserves. During this short period, however, great strides have been made, first in Russia, then in Sweden, Norway, Austria and Germany, and lately in both England and France. Last summer, more than one thousand delegates attended the Esperanto Congress at Geneva, and all spoke readily and exclusively the new language. The fact was revealed at this Conference, that there are now in various parts of the world nearly one hundred thousand registered students of Esperanto, rendering the estimate

not unreasonable that there are several hundred thousand actively interested in it. In Great Britain alone there are more than sixty societies, supplemented by outlying groups in Australia, New Zealand, India and Malta. The new language has already won the official approval of the London Board of Trade, is taught in many commercial schools throughout the British Empire, and is being seriously considered as an essential acquirement in the Consular service.

Despite the efforts of such eminent scholars as M. Beaufront, official France has been slow to extend recognition to the new language, presumably because of a desire to maintain the position of their own as that of the world's diplomacy; but we know from personal inquiry in the smaller towns that the French people are really enthusiastic over Esperanto, nearly every village containing a small group of students, and even the more intelligent innkeepers giving it earnest attention. A strong movement, destined apparently to be crowned with success at no distant date, to add Esperanto to the curriculum of the public schools is now well under way. Canada has many ardent supporters, and in enterprising Japan a single school comprises nearly four hundred students. In this country comparatively little progress has been made, although many of the Universities have small organizations, and the foundation of an International Association has been laid in Boston. Many newspapers and periodicals, devoted exclusively to the language, are published in various parts of the world; and it is a pleasing indication of the spirit of the new West that the first journal of this character to appear in the United States is published in Oklahoma. Briefly, wherever the new language has been introduced it has taken root and achieved almost instantaneous popularity.

The primary cause of its success undoubtedly may be found in the ease with which it can be acquired. We are convinced by personal experience of the justice of the claim that application of one hour a day, by a fairly well-educated person, for a period of three months, is sufficient to ensure reasonable proficiency. Indeed, with the aid of a simple key, intelligible communication may be had immediately with a member of any other nationality possessing like means of translation. That the strength of Esperanto lies in its really amazing simplicity is indicated by the following comparison:



In *English*.—"The international language should be comprehensible to the whole educated world; but no man on earth, except the Volapükist, would comprehend even the word 'Volapük.'"

In *Volapük*.—"Pük bevünetik pakäpalom fa vol lölik pekulivöl; abu men nonik tala sesumü volapükels, kapalom püki lekanix 'Volapük.'"

In *Esperanto*.—"La lingvo internacia estas komprenita de la tuta mondo edukita; sed nenio homo sur la tero eksklusive la volapükistoj komprenas la artan lingvon 'Volapük.'"

According to the official definition adopted by the International Congress, it is a "neutral language, which, while neither intruding upon the interior life of the nations, or in any wise aiming to do away with existing national languages, will enable men of different nationalities to understand one another, will serve as a pacific language in those countries where diverse peoples are at strife on account of language, and in which can be published works that have an equal interest for all peoples."

But it is an error to assume that Esperanto is a purely artificial language. Proof of the feeling and emotion that may be communicated through it is found in the peroration of Dr. Zamenhof himself at Geneva: "Oh, break down the walls between the peoples, give them the means of communicating on neutral ground, for then only will disappear that hatred which we see everywhere."

Having become convinced, as we remarked at the outset, of the practicability of Esperanto as a universal language, we shall soon begin a regular presentation in this REVIEW of primary lessons by competent teachers, supplemented from time to time by authoritative articles, in the hope of arousing general interest. The precise plan of procedure we are unable as yet to define, but it will lack neither system nor such efficient aids as are afforded by comprehensive elucidation, text-books and personal communications compassing queries and answers.

FRIDAY, November 9.

Newspapers on Woman Suffrage.

CLOSE upon the declarations of mid-Western journals in favor of woman suffrage, already noted in this Diary, come others from various sections. The Troy (New York) "Press" "feels most grateful" for our advocacy of the reform, and the New Haven (Connecticut) "Palladium," having quoted the reasons set forth upon these pages, adds:

"This is stating the case strongly; almost too strongly. We hold that suffrage should not be universal, this cheapens it, but based upon qualifications other than those of sex. Illiteracy, pauperism and inability to read the English language—these things might be added advantageously to the limited disqualifications for voting (barring those of sex and age) now in vogue. As a general proposition, it is against public policy to permit of women who are illiterate, or lack the means or ability to support themselves, to have a voice in government. The average intelligence of the electorate should be heightened by the institution of suitable qualifications for suffrage.

"But THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW is right in maintaining that the time has arrived when no distinctions in political privileges should be made between the sexes."

Whether or not there should be an educational qualification is a question not germane to the present discussion; such a restriction would apply with the same force to both sexes as to one.

The Columbus (Ohio) "Journal" declares "the real issues of the day precisely stated" to be "so overwhelming that mere political policy is buried out of sight." "The very fact," it adds, "that the REVIEW wants the assistance of the women in settling these problems is a conclusion that they are greater than woman suffrage, or tariff, railroad rate, food laws or anything else, for if these abuses and injustices are corrected the incidental policies settle themselves," a declaration to which, while maintaining the advantage of our proposed safeguard, if not complete solution, we take no exception.

The Salt Lake City (Utah) "News," after asserting the propriety of permitting those who are compelled to bear taxation and obey laws to participate in enactment of statutes, and pronouncing unfitness for military service a specious argument, since millions of men who hold the franchise are legally incapacitated for such work, says:

"The right to hold office may be maintained by the same reasoning as that concerning the suffrage. There are some offices for which women are not adapted, and there are many men, perhaps the majority of them, who are also unfitted for offices in the gift of the people. The same reasons offered against women apply with equal force to many men. The good sense of the public has to be exercised in reference to male candidates, and it can therefore be left with safety to the discretion of the voters as to women candidates. We are pleased to see so influential a magazine as THE NORTH AMERICAN REVIEW take the rational side of a long dispute."

The Scranton (Pennsylvania) "Times" regards "the conversion of an important and conservative monthly to full suffrage without distinction of sex as an encouragement to woman suffragists everywhere and likely to give their cause a new forward impulse," but thinks—and we agree—that "so long as the great majority of women continue indifferent to equal suffrage there is little likelihood the boon will be granted."

The conservative "Evening Post" of New York city, making a prompt application, wondered "how women would vote in the present (Hughes-Hearst) campaign," and, while conceding that "thousands of working women would vote for the California millionaire, in the touching belief, shared with many men, that his election would mean an immediate increase in their earnings," yet was "inclined to think that women would be quicker to see through his shams and be far more repelled by his personal career than are the men to whom he appeals"—an opinion likely to find general concurrence.

The Chicago (Illinois) "Inter-Ocean" and the Topeka (Kansas) "Capital" would appreciate better results in Colorado before encouraging extension of the franchise in other States, thus maintaining an attitude perhaps justifiable if the assumption be granted that mining communities afford a fair test. This assumption, however, upon general principles and for manifest reasons closely related to the almost invariable inaccuracy of conclusions based upon peculiar and purely local conditions, we cannot admit. The actual results in the State and cities of Colorado we shall summarize in due course of time.

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SATURDAY, November 10.

Of Friendship among Women.

CAN women be friends? History and tradition abound in evidences of great and enduring attachments among men. "The soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David" so firmly that the Hebrew prince did not hesitate to invite the wrath of the great king, his father, and himself forfeit the crown; the Pythagorean Damon was happy to pledge his very life for the doubtful reappearance of Pythias; even the egoist Montaigne was so much affected by the death of La Boëtie that, to escape from his melancholy, he "chose a new mistress," and at intervals to the day of his death, in the words of his own journal, "was suddenly seized with such painful thoughts of his friend, and it was so

long before he came to himself, that it did him much harm."

Subjecting this emotion to analysis, in conformity with his custom, he reached the conclusion that true friendship could exist only between beings wholly independent one of another. A father could not hold the relationship towards his son, because of the stronger paternal attitude and the necessary disparity in age prohibiting equal comprehension of all subjects; between brothers, "the complication of interests, the division of estates, the raising of the one at the undoing of the other, strangely weaken and slacken the fraternal tie," since of necessity pursuing fortune and advancement by the same path they must often jostle and hinder one another; betwixt the sexes love intervenes, "more active, more eager, more sharp, but withal more precipitous, fickle, moving and inconstant, a fever subject to intermission," whereas true friendship is "a general and universal fire," temperate and equal, constant and steady, easy and smooth, "without poignancy or roughness"; indeed, even among themselves, women are pronounced incapable of maintaining the sacred tie, not being "endued with firmness of mind to endure the constraint of so hard and durable a knot."

In this final, brusque declaration the philosopher readily accepted the teachings of the ancient schools without regard to the fact, which even then he must have surmised, that recognition of his own great powers was to depend upon the unselfish devotion and untiring efforts of the adopted daughter, whose soul, he predicted, would "one day be capable of very great things, and, amongst others, of the perfection of that sacred friendship to which we do not read that any of her sex could even yet arrive." We can but conclude that, in common with the majority of his sex, the great man was convinced that a happy exception had been made for his particular benefit in suitable recognition of his extraordinary talents.

But it is easy to convict a verbose philosopher of inconsistency; the question whether women are temperamentally capable of true friendship still remains. Sacrifices for the sake of love of man and offspring are recorded without number, but female Davids and Damons are not readily discovered in either history or legend. Professions of Platonic affection continue to evoke jeers of incredulity, and the traditional disingenuousness of "dearest

friends" still plays well its part in caricature. The changeableness of woman's nature has become axiomatic. Can it be that, throughout the ages, even to these enlightened days, it has retained consistency in this respect alone? It suffices for us to raise the question; to others of more certain mind we relinquish the hazardous privilege of adducing evidence and passing judgment.

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MONDAY, *November 12.*

Threescore Years and Ten.

WHEN we speak of threescore years and ten being the allotted period of human life, the reference is general, of course, implying no arbitrary limit of physical existence, mental capacity or moral usefulness, since the Psalmist himself concedes fourscore years "by reason of strength." Many men we know, some of whom we shall name presently, find themselves, at seventy, at the zenith of their development and their powers at full maturity. The idea the great singer intended to convey was doubtless that there does come a time in life when it behooves one to stop and think—and perhaps change his course or restrict his energies. Our great humorist has views upon this subject, as indeed upon all others, and one year ago, at a celebration of his own safe arrival, he expressed them after this pleasing fashion:

"The seventieth birthday! It is the time of life when you arrive at a new and awful dignity; when you may throw aside the decent reserves which have oppressed you for a generation and stand unafraid and unabashed upon your seven-terraced summit and look down and teach—unrebuked. . . .

"Threescore years and ten!

"It is the Scriptural statute of limitations. After that, you owe no active duties; for you the strenuous life is over. You are a time-expired man, to use Kipling's military phrase: You have served your term, well or less well, and you are mustered out. You are become an honorary member of the republic, you are emancipated, compulsions are not for you, nor any bugle-call but 'lights out.' You pay the time-worn duty bills if you choose, or decline if you prefer—and without prejudice—for they are not legally collectable.

"The previous-engagement plea, which in forty years has cost you so many twinges, you can lay aside forever; on this side of the grave you will never need it again. If you shrink at thought of night, and winter, and the late home-coming from the banquet and the lights and the laughter through the deserted streets—a desolation which would not remind you now, as for a generation it did, that your friends are sleeping, and you must creep in a-tiptoe and not disturb them, but would only remind you that you need not tiptoe, you can never disturb them

more—if you shrink at thought of these things, you need only reply, “Your invitation honors me, and pleases me because you still keep me in your remembrance, but I am seventy; seventy, and would nestle in the chimney corner, and smoke my pipe, and read my book, and take my rest, wishing you well in all affection, and that when you in your turn shall arrive at pier No. 70 you may step aboard your waiting ship with a reconciled spirit, and lay your course toward the sinking sun with a contented heart.”

Such are the undisputed privileges of those who arrive at the pier; but others have rights, nevertheless, which cannot be ignored, one of which was exercised by the friends of this man when they gathered to pay him homage. If we had been writing the ninetieth psalm, we should not have left the impression that threescore years and ten signified even the beginning of the end; we should have suggested that as a suitable time for the recognition of genius, worth, friendship, character, good deeds. Such would surely be a pretty custom and one tending to enliven our ill nourished and sadly neglected sympathies. If it now prevailed, what a harvest of tributes the coming year would bring forth! Only the other evening was celebrated the seventieth birthday of Henry Mills Alden, America's foremost magazine editor, simultaneously with pleasing recognition of the arrival at the same milestone, to the very day, of Thomas Bailey Aldrich, America's most brilliant poet; in March pier Number 70 will be reached by William Dean Howells, America's first man of letters, and Grover Cleveland, her first private citizen; in April, by John Pierpont Morgan, the greatest financier America has had from the beginning of her history; in November, by Andrew Carnegie, the most striking example of the opportunities she has accorded brains and industry; in December, by George Dewey, her only and, since Paul Jones, her greatest Admiral. A more illustrious group of true Americans could not be formed; let us then be merry and give them feasts, not failing, however, after Paul's advice to Titus, to adjure them hereafter to continue “sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience.”

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TUESDAY, November 13.

American Girls and Boys.

WE have received the following interesting communication from one of the editors of the “St. Nicholas” magazine:

*To the Editor of The North American Review:*

SIR,—Under the head of “The Editor's Diary” for October 19th appears this rather surprising statement:

"We find little that is interesting in the American girl of to-day between the ages of fifteen and twenty-two. She has failed to keep pace in any respect with the American boy, whose advancement we recently remarked with satisfaction. Indeed, if the blunt truth be spoken, she is an intolerable bore, self-conscious, ignorant, and concerned chiefly with matrimonial aspirations."

Now, it so happens that I have had rather exceptional opportunities for comparing the American boy and girl, or rather their intellectual exhibits, with resulting conclusions somewhat different from those set down by the editor of the REVIEW. For more than seven years it has been my privilege to conduct for the "St. Nicholas" magazine a department in which the features are supplied by young people who compete for monthly prizes. To this department, poems, short sketches, stories, drawings, photographs, and puzzles are contributed in great numbers by children of all ages up to eighteen; and as the subjects are supplied by the editor and selected to cover a pretty wide educational range, it would seem that from the returns a fair deduction might be drawn as to the comparative mental activity of the sexes within the competitive age limits. I shall not assume to speak as one having authority of what may happen after these young people have passed their eighteenth birthday, for my direct observation ends at this point, though it seems unlikely that with the passing of this particular milestone the boys should suddenly become all wisdom and the girls all vanity, nor do I believe this to be the case.

Now, let us see: I have the magazines before me, I can count the returns in a minute. In the year just closing (volumes 1 and 2, 1906) there were sixty-three winners, fifteen years old and over, of the highest distinction, that is to say, gold and cash prizes. Of these, twenty-nine were boys and *thirty-four were girls*, an advantage of over nineteen per cent. in favor of the girls. Nor is this an unusual year. Those who care to consult the volumes will find that in some years the percentage has been greater.

It is supposable that there are as many boys as girls in families where "St. Nicholas" is taken, and if, as may be the case, the boys take a lesser interest than the girls in this particular department, then this fact of itself constitutes an argument against the REVIEW's position, for the reason that, as before indicated, the subjects given are by no means abstractly artistic and literary in tone (and it would not help the REVIEW's case even if they were), but educational as well, often selected for the express purpose of developing a knowledge of the world's progress and history. Let us go a little farther, and quote an example or two of work done by American girls. Here is a poem by an American girl of fifteen, the earliest age included by the REVIEW editor in the period allowed to her for ignorance and frivolity:

#### "THE FOREST VOICE.

"Do **you** not hear them call you, dear, away?  
Sweet, scarce distinguished voices of the night,  
Spreading before you o'er the field and brae,  
To where the first dark trunks shut out the light.

"The sombre, brooding branches in the dark  
Hold out strange treasures; winds that sing and sigh,  
And moonlight drifting down, spark after spark,  
From the far, high-lit altar of the sky.

"They sing you night songs, half articulate,  
They lead you, fairy child, along the path  
Where—but the forest-led may roam and wait  
The visions which the world-old forest hath.

"The wistful trees bend closer unto you;  
Dream-child, you long so earnestly to pace  
The great dim roads no mortal ever knew,  
Forever in the darkness and the space.

"Childhood is gone, night vanishes, the song  
Is stilled. Go also back from fancy's gleam,  
Leave the dream forest where you lingered long,—  
But take with you the memory of your dream."

This is a poem which almost any one, of either sex or any age, who is addicted to verse (and most of us have sinned) might be willing to sign, and it is wholly the work of the girl who sent it, for all contributions are endorsed by the sender's parents as to "age and originality." The highest-class publication does not always print better verse than that.

Such work may be found in almost any number of the department mentioned. The body of the magazine finds it difficult to get anything as good; and here is a little prose sketch by a League girl which might serve as a standard of excellence even for the *NORTH AMERICAN*:

#### "MY FAVORITE CHARACTER IN HISTORY

"It has always been said that to judge fairly of the life and character of some famous historical man or woman, one must take into consideration the age and country in which he or she lived. Environments and circumstances have such an important influence toward the molding of ideas. But Joan of Arc's life history is exceptional in this particular. Her actions were influenced by no personal motive, but by purely religious and patriotic enthusiasm. She was honorable when people in the highest stations had forgotten the very existence of honor; delicate and loyal when it was the common practice to be coarse and false, to keep no promises, and to espouse no cause except for love of money or personal advancement. She was truthful when almost everybody lied, unselfish and refined when many were hard, selfish, and given to sinful luxury.

"Many have called her fanatical. If absolute devotion to one's God, one's king, and one's country, regardless of self, asking no reward, can be called fanaticism, let us have more such fanatics! Her military genius was remarkable. Generals of long experience regarded her schemes of attack with great respect, and she is the only person in the world, of either sex, who has ever had supreme command of the forces of a nation at the age of seventeen.

"In spite of all her devotion and heroic struggle, her dastardly king deserted her; did not even make one attempt to rescue her, but left her to her horrible fate. Her captors wore out her physical strength by long, tedious examinations and cruel imprisonment, forced her to sign a foolish confession of sorcery, and then broke all their promises and burned her—Joan of Arc, the deliverer of France, though only a



child in years—at the stake! Such ingratitude and cruelty is incomprehensible; but her name will go down through countless ages, while they will be known only as the murderers of the loveliest character in history.”

As a matter of fact, whatever the boys may do later, and they will do much when the day of their development comes—as they always have—I think we may set it down as a fact that, so far as general intellectual advancement and attainments are concerned, the girls between the ages of fifteen and eighteen have them beaten—if the REVIEW will pardon the slang phrase for the sake of its picturesque strength—“hands down.”

In what, then, is the American girl inferior to the American boy? In sports and athletics, which require endurance and physical strength? Certainly. In business, mathematics and mechanical engineering? Very likely—these are the American boy’s peculiar heritage, even as the American girl’s estate lies in making herself and her surroundings lovely, and in her early knowledge of domestic economy. Does the boy excel her in deportment? Never. In languages? It is unlikely. But, admitting all that the boy may fairly claim and a little more for good measure, it does seem to one who has had the opportunity of observing pretty carefully that the wide and inclusive deduction of the REVIEW that the American girl is “an intolerable bore, self-conscious, ignorant and concerned chiefly with matrimonial aspirations,” and that she has “failed to keep pace in any respect with the American boy,” is not sufficiently justified, to say the least.

ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE.

That a majority of the prizes referred to were won by girls is not, to us, surprising; we wonder rather that so many boys between the ages of fifteen and eighteen found time to engage in the competition. The evidence of literary deftness afforded by the pretty verses are surely encouraging, though, we fear, they are of the exceptional character which tends to indicate the rule.